

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 3, 2003

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2003–04 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1365

Introduced by Assembly Member Steinberg

February 21, 2003

An act to add Section 10601.3 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1365, as amended, Steinberg. Child welfare services.

Under existing law, the State Department of Social Services oversees the administration of county public social services, including child welfare services.

The Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act of 2001 requires the department to establish the California Child and Family Service Review System, in order to review, commencing January 1, 2004, all county child welfare systems.

Existing law requires the California Health and Human Services Agency to convene a workgroup comprised of representatives of specified entities and organizations to establish a work plan by which the child and family service reviews shall be conducted. As part of the work plan established by the workgroup, county child welfare departments are required to perform a self-assessment of child welfare services in each county.

This bill would require that, in accordance with the work plan, each county child welfare department establish a team of specified individuals to conduct these self-assessments.

By expanding the duties of county welfare departments, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement, including the creation of a State Mandates Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates that do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

~~Existing law requires each county to provide child welfare services.~~

~~Existing law provides for the administration of various child welfare services pursuant to regulations and procedures adopted by the State Department of Social Services.~~

~~This bill would declare the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would improve the child welfare services program by instituting specified improvements.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~ yes.
State-mandated local program: ~~no~~ yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 ~~SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that~~
- 2 *SECTION 1. Section 10601.3 is added to the Welfare and*
- 3 *Institutions Code, to read:*
- 4 *10601.3. (a) In accordance with the work plan developed*
- 5 *pursuant to Section 10601.2 that requires county child welfare*
- 6 *departments to perform self-assessments of child welfare services,*
- 7 *the child welfare agency in each county shall appoint a team of*
- 8 *individuals, as described in subdivision (b), to perform a*
- 9 *self-assessment of child welfare services. The membership of the*
- 10 *team may differ according to a specific county's profile or specific*
- 11 *strengths, weaknesses, or other special programs or circumstances*
- 12 *in the county.*
- 13 *(b) The self-assessment team in each county shall include, but*
- 14 *not be limited to, the following persons:*

1 (1) County child welfare services administrators, managers,
2 and social workers.

3 (2) County probation administrators, supervisors, and officers.

4 (3) Local representatives of the California Youth Connection.

5 (4) Local biological parents.

6 (5) Local foster parents.

7 (6) County mental health administrators, supervisors, and
8 mental health workers.

9 (7) Local education administrators and teachers.

10 (8) Representatives of local California tribes.

11 SEC. 2. Notwithstanding Section 17610 of the Government
12 Code, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this
13 act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local
14 agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made
15 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division
16 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code. If the statewide cost of the
17 claim for reimbursement does not exceed one million dollars
18 (\$1,000,000), reimbursement shall be made from the State
19 Mandates Claims Fund.

20 ~~outcomes of the child welfare services program can be improved,~~
21 ~~by doing all of the following:~~

22 ~~(1) Emphasizing child abuse prevention and early intervention~~
23 ~~services and making the system less adversarial.~~

24 ~~(2) Restructuring services to families so that abused children~~
25 ~~can safely stay with or more quickly be returned safely to their~~
26 ~~birth parents.~~

27 ~~(3) Promoting adoption or guardianship, preferably with~~
28 ~~relatives, for all abused children regardless of age or~~
29 ~~circumstances whose parents are unable to respond to services or~~
30 ~~treatment in a timely fashion.~~

31 ~~(4) Ensuring emotional and financial security for foster youth~~
32 ~~who leave care as young adults.~~

33 ~~(b) It is, therefore, the intent of the Legislature to enact~~
34 ~~legislation that would improve child welfare services by~~
35 ~~instituting all of the following improvements:~~

36 ~~(1) Community partnerships.~~

37 ~~(2) Differential responses.~~

- 1 ~~(3) Concurrent planning and permanency planning for older~~
- 2 ~~youth.~~

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